

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 200367
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 R

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DRAFTED BY NEA/INS:AATHIBAUT,JR.:JES

APPROVED BY NEA/INS:PWLANDE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

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PLS. PASS TO HERBERT LEVIN, DCM COLOMBO, PRATT BYRD

FOLLOWING REPEAT COLOMBO 3069 ACTION SECSTATE 23 AUG 77

QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CE

SUBJ: TRAVEL TO AND WITHIN SRI LANKA

REF: STATE 199776

1. KANDY PERAHERA HAS NOT BEEN CANCELLED, BUT HAS ACTUALLY
TAKEN PLACE EACH NIGHT SO FAR, INCLUDING DURING THE WEEKEND
CURFEW, WHEN IT WAS, HOWEVER, FOR NIGHT OR TWO REDUCED TO
PROCESSION WITHIN TEMPLE PRECINCTS INVOLVING ABOUT FIFTEEN
ELEPHANTS. LOCAL PRESS AUGUST 23 ANNOUNCED EXPANDED ROUTE
FOR TONIGHT'S PERAHERA AND CONTINUES TO ADVERTISE SPECIAL
TRAINS TO KANDY FOR LATER DAYS OF THE EVENT, WHICH CLIMAXES
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IN FINAL NIGHT ON AUGUST 29 AND DAY PERAHERA ON AUGUST 30.

2. EMBASSY CANNOT OF COURSE PREDICT EXACT SECURITY SITUATION
FOR NEXT FEW DAYS, AS THERE IS A NATURAL ELEMENT OF UNCER-
TAINTY INVOLVED. AUGUST 22 SAW NEW OUTBREAKS IN TRINCOMALEE
(WHICH WAS PUT UNDER 36-HOUR CURFEW TO END MORNING OF AUGUST
24), MATARA, BATTICALOA AND KATARAGAMA. WE WILL HAVE FULLER

REPORT LATER TODAY.

3. THERE HAVE BEEN NO ANNOUNCED RESTRICTIONS ON INTERNAL TRAVEL BUT THERE ARE NO NIGHT TRAINS, AND ON CERTAIN ROUTES, I.E., TOWARD NORTH, NONE IN DAYTIME EITHER. SO FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, TOURIST BUSES AND CARS HAVE MOVED FREELY, SOMETIMES UNDER SECURITY FORCE ESCORT. UNDERSTANDABLY, OUR OWN PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN STAYING PUT IN COLOMBO. THERE IS NO INTER-CITY TRAVEL DURING ACTUAL CURFEW PERIODS, AND IT SEEMS NOT UNLIKELY THAT ISLAND-WIDE NIGHTTIME CURFEWS MAY CONTINUE FOR A FEW MORE DAYS.
WRIGGINS.
UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER".

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL DISORDERS, TRAVEL CONTROLS, CURFEW
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE200367
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AATHIBAULT,JR.:JES
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770304-0494
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770832/aaaabavn.tel
Line Count: 75
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 33c6de55-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 199776
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1513747
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TRAVEL TO AND WITHIN SRI LANKA
TAGS: PINT, CE
To: LONDON
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/33c6de55-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009